



GUNFIGHTER GAZETTE

1st Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment Family Readiness Group Newsletter

AUGUST 2004

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A Message From Gun 6

Contributed by LTC Dave Moore, Gun 6



As the six-month anniversary of our deployment approaches, I'm happy to report that we're halfway to "mission complete"! At times, our February departure seems like every bit of six months ago, but there are other times when it seems like yesterday (OK, maybe the day before yesterday). Undeniable, though, is the fact that we couldn't have gotten this far without the tremendous support we receive from Katterbach and the States. Let me take this edition to sing the song of the unsung hero—I'll spare you all my off-key melody. The Gunfighters would like to sincerely thank:

Our spouses for your extra effort caring for our precious families under a "parental power play" (hockey for "playing a man down"); for your letters, e-mails, packages, and pictures; for VTCs; and for your dedicated presence, the rock of stability that keeps us focused.

Our children for understanding that mom or dad is away on very important business; for sending your pictures, drawings, and treasures; and for missing us as much as we miss you.

TF Gunfighter, our rear detachment for taking good care of our facilities, families, soldiers, and our unit business in Katterbach with a highly professional, selfless attitude; for supporting all the family, community, and TF events with enthusiasm; and for responding to our downrange needs with pride and purpose.

Our family readiness group for volunteering your time and talents to care for your unit family members as if they were your own; for building a stronger, self-reliant team by providing caring leadership; for organizing superb activities; for sharing information (like this great newsletter); and for just being there when needed.

Our friends and relatives for supporting your soldier by corresponding, assisting, understanding, listening, advising, forgiving, and caring.

Our schools, teachers, and principals for continuing to provide a stable and normal environment to learn and interact; for helping to develop,

"Gun 6" is continued on page 3.

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A Message from Gun 7

Contributed by CSM James Martin, Gun 7

Grüss Gott! Wie Gehts!

I just want to say that I could not have a better time without our soldiers deployed here in Iraq and that we could not have a better group of soldiers deployed here in Iraq.

For the most part, morale is higher than any other unit stationed on the FOB. I have asked around, and it is clear that the Gunfighters are motivated and are in the highest spirits for the known circumstances. I don't need to tell you that we have the best soldiers throughout the brigade.

The Gunfighters are at the halfway point of this long deployment. The time seems to be going slow, but nonetheless, our soldiers stay mission-ready and steadfast. In just a couple of months, we will be preparing for the arrival of the unit that will be relieving us. And we will be writing our final chapter in the Gunfighter history.

Our soldiers could not stay focused and ready without the help of our families, so even though you may not be here, you still have a great impact on the success of the Gunfighters. So keep up the good work, and remain strong.

Like I have always said: NCOs lead the way, but the soldiers make it happen.

Taz Devil Update

Contributed by 1LT Mike Ferlazzo, Taz 16

The good news is that July is over and the halfway point of this deployment is in sight. The bad news is that CPT Broam and 1SG Lee will be back shortly, which means that the remaining Taz Devils will have to put clothes back on and stop chanting around the severed boar's head that's in the middle of camp and actually go back to work. I'm kidding of course; we have been doing fine, thanks to the leadership of my pal LT Morris. He's done a great job of holding down the fort while our commander participates in a training exercise at Fort Rucker for the unit that will replace us.

Everyone in the company continues to amaze me with their daily devotion to this mission. Our aircraft fly every single day in continued support of our division comrades and the Iraqi National Guard. A lot of our missions continue to focus on protecting this country's infrastructure. The appreciation that we receive from the ground commanders is what keeps the majority of us motivated. It is good to know that by having our Apaches airborne, we have a substantial impact on the safety of our fellow troops. Without the dedication of every single Taz Devil, this incredible monthly task could not be accomplished.

Life within our living area continues to improve. The Taz weight room is up and running, and every once in a while, you can catch one of us working off some of the good food from the mess hall. The nicest upgrade in the past month was the arrival of porcelain toilets in our area. Ah yes, it's the little things that matter. No longer will we have to sweat off three pounds in a plastic portable bathroom everyday. It's only getting better in our area, and I



Top: CW3 Thompson has a close encounter with a camel spider. **Bottom:** SGT Combs helps launch an aircraft.

"Taz Update" is continued on page 3.

Wolfpack Update

Contributed by SFC Jason Bryant

The Wolfpack has been graced by the addition of another young pup. **SPC Joshua and Elizabeth Whitmer** are the proud parents of **Jeffery Andrew Whitmer**, born July 3 in Katterbach, Germany. SPC Whitmer will be joining his wife around the twenty-sixth of July to enjoy his new inspiration in life. Congratulations and good luck.

The young Wolfpack maintainers have shown their strengths in aircraft maintenance once again, maintaining more than 370 flight hours this month. The maintainers have gone above and beyond the call of duty to make this happen with only five helicopters available for missions and one of those five going into phase (long-term maintenance). The Wolfpack maintainers have surpassed their peers in the other companies with their dedication and responsiveness to the flight crews and the helicopters.

Our young cubs are not only outstanding crew chiefs, but they are also great soldiers. They have proven their knowledge by taking the top three spots at the battalion soldier of the month board for July. **SPC Barreras** took control of the board and showed them who is the boss; runners-up were **SPC Ogg** and **SPC Johnson**.

Our junior enlisted soldiers also led the way in B Company's most recent physical training test with an average score of 274 points. Officers averaged 247, warrant officers averaged 230, and non-commissioned Officers averaged 236. As a company, our average was a score of 247.

The R & R plan came together for the Wolfpack in July. We were allotted five slots for R & R and two slots for FMPP, one each to Qatar and Lake Dokan. (We're sorry to report that we don't have any photos of **SPC Barreras** and **CW4 Tomczyk** sporting their new swimwear.) All of the soldiers who requested a break during the month of July have been treated to a great few days away from the torment of Groundhog Day in Iraq.

Around July 12, the Gunfighter battalion had a special mission: We flew our crippled pup of an aircraft (475) to Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) to exchange it for a better bird, compliments of the 1st Armored Division's 1-501st Aviation. The battalion received seven helicopters to assist in the Gunfighters' mission in Iraq. During our stay at BIAP, we inventoried all of the necessary equipment, signed for the aircraft, and launched one of their missions with their pilots and our new aircraft. Later that day, the seven helicopters left BIAP with LTC Moore leading the way in a helicopter that had no air-conditioning. Imagine flying in a sealed helicopter for one hour with no air-conditioning when it is 110 degrees Fahrenheit outside.

For the month of August, B Co. would like to wish a happy birthday to the following: **SGT Rodgers** on August 3, **CW2 Francisco** on August 4, **SPC Whitmer** on August 9, **Cory Wise** on August 19, **Lillian Laumbach** on August 26, and **CW2 Moseley** on August 27. Happy anniversary wishes go out to the following: **SPC Laura and Lyron Pinckney** on August 21, **SPC Shawn and Jennifer Noel** on August 24, and **CW2 Troy and Paula Moseley** on August 28. And finally, we would like to congratulate **1SG Douglas K. Greene** on twenty years in the Army.



The B Co. birthday boys include (from left) CW2 Francisco, CW2 Moseley, and SGT Rodgers.

Taz Update

Continued from page 2.

am looking forward to seeing what comes next.

R & R allocations for the upcoming month are high. Four Taz Devils will be making their way back to you in August. We will continue to keep you updated on the progress of the program, but the outlook is hopeful.

I know that the entire Taz family struggles with the separation that this deployment has caused. This experience has changed us all by putting life into perspective. Expect us to hug you a little bit tighter when we get back because your continued support is what gets us through our days and gives us the ability to continue this worthwhile endeavor.

The Taz Devil family would like to wish a happy birthday to **Phillip Knigge** on August 30 and happy anniversary to **CPT John and Julie Broom** on August 19.

Once again, thank you for all you do! Attack!

Gun 6

Continued from page 1.

discipline, and nurture our future leaders; and for recognizing the stresses and emotions of a student with a deployed parent.

235th BSB and all Katterbach community agencies for allowing our soldiers to deploy knowing that the superb benefits and services they enjoyed are still available to their families; for making and sharing the "Day in the Life of Katterbach" video; and for seeking new ways to rally "our fair city" even closer as a community.

We are all looking forward to the day we will reunite with our loved ones—the ones for whom we are fighting to protect. Until that day, we will remain keenly focused on our mission and confident that we have the tremendous support of our families, friends and community. Thank you for the secure feeling.

Ghostrider Update

Contributed by 1LT Shane Scott, Ghost 16

July was an exciting month for the Ghostriders. Thanks to our USAREUR friends, the 1st Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, C Co.'s fleet of aircraft has grown by two. Our neighborhood here in Balad continues to grow, as we have several hundred new neighbors. Our camp, Ghost Town, has grown in several ways because of the hard work of our unit's soldiers, our attachments, and some new Iraqi friends. Finally, while everything else is growing, our area of operations will soon be shrinking. Although it seems to us like the same thing over and over here, we see change all around us.

One of the biggest changes that we see in our area is the arrival of Task Force 160 from Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. Along with an Air Force unit, they have taken over what we once considered our giant back yard. The scenery has changed from sand and scrub brush to hangars, concrete walls, and buildings—though this is not to imply that there is no longer any sand and dirt in the area. There have been some growing pains as we learn to have people and things where we are used to having nothing, but now we hardly notice them; perhaps this is because of the twelve-foot concrete wall between us and them, but it is difficult to say.

Another big event for the Ghostriders this month is the addition of two new aircraft to our original six. Several of us made a trip to Baghdad toward the middle of the month and picked up aircraft 438 and 197 from the departing 1-501st, whose soldiers are on their way back to Germany. This unit will no longer need their Apaches because they are going to Ft. Hood to become a Longbow Battalion, just like 1-1 will do next year. It won't be long until our battalion starts packing up our aircraft to hand off to another unit or to turn in so they can become Longbows themselves. Until then, we will continue our mission here in Iraq with the same diligence and pride that those before us have taken.

The camp has taken on a bit of a new look as of

late. Our soldiers work closely with six Iraqi gentlemen who are helping us protect our camp. Each day, these men fill sandbags for the company (we pay them, of course), and each night the company comes together to build walls around our living spaces. With every passing day, our camp becomes a safer place to live. We estimate that along with our Iraqi friends, we have filled and stacked around twenty thousand sandbags. Although this is a huge number, there is still work left to do.

In closing, it seems appropriate to mention another big number. I am sure that each of us who reads this publication knows that our unit will soon reach the six-month mark. As we approach the halfway point, we start looking to the future and the reunion with our family and friends. Soon we can stop counting up and start counting down. But even though we have reached an important point, there is still much work to be done. We continue to work hard and to take pride in what we are doing to help the people of Iraq. Each of our families and us has made great sacrifices, but know that we are making a difference. Every day when I pick up our Iraqi employees, they tell me that they love America and that they especially love our soldiers. If you have a loved one here, please let them know how much you care for them. Although it is nice to have a forty-five-year-old Iraqi man tell you that he loves you, it means so much more to hear it from you.

The Ghostriders would like to wish a happy birthday this month to **Nathan Christopher Wright** on July 22, **CW2 Brent Cole** on August 12, **Christy Mitchell** on August 23, **SPC Charles Perry** on August 25, **Alison Fennema** on August 28, and **Brittany Sellers** on August 31. Happy anniversary wishes go out to the following: **Charles and Leteasa Perry** on August 9, **Ryan and Toni Collier** on August 10, **Tom and Heidi Brautigam** on August 12, and **Jeffrey and Sandra Lawson** on August 27.

Top: SGT Walker is promoted to staff sergeant by CW3 Carter and CPT Fennema. **Bottom:** An Apache flies alongside a Cobra helicopter.



Looking Ahead



We'll include more information in September's newsletter, but mark your calendars now for these upcoming community events:

- ♦ The Ansbach commissary will hold a focus group on September 14. Voice concerns and share ideas with commissary members. Everyone is invited to attend, and kids are welcome.
- ♦ GI Jayne Day will be held September 11. Interested spouses will travel to Kitzigen for this day-long event for a rousing game of paintball. CDC and SAS will have a special opening for child care.

Viking Update

Contributed by CPT Scott Thompson, Viking 6

What is that crazy first sergeant up to now? I hear a muffled sound--definitely a yell but not too clear, sort of like he had not yet fully inflated his lungs before hollering. It was not that loud, but for some reason it catches my attention, resonating in the back of my mind.

The second time it sticks, maybe because it was louder or more urgent. "Fire!"

Fire? What could he mean?

"FIRE!" the first sergeant yells a third time.

Oh *fire*, the formal name we call the process of open combustion. The realization struck me. He means something has burst into a flame. Why exactly am I still sitting here?

I bolt out of the PC shack and see the quizzical look on some of the soldiers' faces. They obviously have yet to process exactly what the word "fire" means. I round the corner and see flames peaking up from the corner of one of the tents our contractors live in. 1SG Williams has the wherewithal to grab a fire extinguisher to battle the growing blaze. It dawns on me that I am ill equipped to put out a fire without one; ordering it to stop burning would likely have little effect.

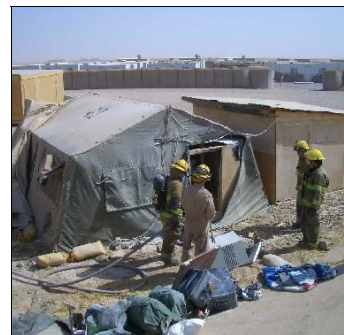
I turn and run back to grab a fire extinguisher and see that at least a few soldiers have snapped to reality. SGT Sabbagh runs into the shops building, presumably to get a fire extinguisher of his own. Others pop their heads outside to see what all the commotion is about.

I arrive as a veritable crowd begins converging on the site. Many are having the realization I just had; they are also poorly equipped to battle a fire, and so they mostly stand and watch. The few who had grabbed fire extinguishers are getting into the thick of it. 1SG Williams expends his, as does 1SG Green. CW5 Bobby McQuaid from brigade is there, too (What are the odds of that? Sightings of him are nearly as elusive as a sighting of the Loch Ness Monster or El Chupacabra).

Most people seem to have grabbed the small, easily transported five-pound fire extinguishers. Unfortunately, the brief expulsion of gas does little to actually extinguish the blaze. As their users stop to view the fruits of their labor, those of us with bigger and better fire extinguishers are ready for our turn.

After pushing through the throngs and putting the larger fire extinguishers to work, things start to get under control. Twenty fire extinguishers later, the flames are no longer threatening to consume all matter in a ten-meter radius. I start to relax a little. SGT Virgil moves herself to a good vantage on top of the old Iraqi bunker to snap a few pictures and critique our fire-fighting efforts. Various individuals from across post arrive to gawk.

And then the fire department arrives. They take immediate control of the scene, running about making keen observations like, "Hey, the tent was on fire!" and "Seems they used a few fire extinguishers" (perhaps the



Left: An unassuming CW4 Calkins knows not what CPT Thompson has done to his hair. **Right:** The fire fighters come to rescue of D Co.

big pile of red cylinders clued them in). Apparently each fire crew has a chief whose responsibility is to watch the others run about while drinking a coke. I am glad I manage to learn something new every day.

The Fourth of July was celebrated across FOB Speicher in the finest of Army traditions--mandatory fun! Most were pleasantly surprised and enjoyed the Olympic Games theme of the day. Delta Company had soldiers participate in both football and volleyball (where they made the semi-finals), as well as enjoy the late-night concert from an imported Top-40 band (the local Top-40 music leaves much to be desired).

Viking 06 recently took a trip to see the soldiers residing at LSA Anaconda. They remain in high spirits in their little corner of that airfield, despite conditions that are a bit austere by our standards (they still reside in tents). The battalion is still working to establish the facilities to allow them to move to FOB Speicher.

The updated company Web site should be available for viewing soon. PV2 Williams from shops platoon has been spearheading this effort. My vision is to have information available in three languages, so each of you can surf in your native tongue. We literally have hundreds of pictures to post, and we are trying to do so in a manner that lets you search and find your soldier pictured at work and play. If you would like to see any other features, please e-mail the webmaster. The D Co. site can be accessed from the battalion Web site at www.1-1avnbnsbach.army.mil/.

The All-American Luau has been postponed due to operational considerations (Duty First!). However, it has been rescheduled for August 11, the 180-day anniversary of our deployment. We have a full evening of activities planned and expect to have plenty of photos to share.

Hammer Update

Contributed by CPT Levi Dunton, Hammer 6

I have a confession to make: This letter is starting to feel like homework, or more appropriately, a timed essay test. I seem to remember the deadline at the last minute, and as a result, feverishly crank out some random stream-of-consciousness just to have something to turn in by the time the buzzer rings. Proofreading? That would take time, which I don't particularly have in abundance. News? The only time I remember information worth relaying is when I'm reviewing the published newsletter days later, trying to ignore all of my grammatical errors and wondering if the malaria pills might have some hallucinogenic side effect that could account for the crazy talk by the loony with my signature.

But this month is going to be different! This letter is going to be informative and succinct; an actual *newsletter*. Well, it was going to be different until once again the days snuck by while I was preoccupied with counting trailer hitches, reformatting spreadsheets, and contemplating my dessert strategy—I mean, *someone* has got to beat Captain Strazdas's prodigious fourteen-ice-cream-bars-at-one-phenomenal-sitting feat, right? It might mean that I would have to cut back on the vegetables, or, well, even dinner for that matter, but you can't expect to compete in the big leagues without making some sacrifices. Perhaps if I deliberately dehydrated myself before dinner I could. . .

There I go again. Now it's the day after the letter is due, and I'm still wandering off on inconsequential tangents. Maybe it's something in the air here. No, not dust, though there is no shortage of that in the air—or in my lungs, which might explain the shortness of breath I experienced after tapping out at ice cream bar number thirteen. If only I had a genetic propensity for eating the way Lance Armstrong has a penchant for prolonged physical agony, I might be able to hang with the heavyweights in the dining facility. Everybody should have a dream, right?

Whoa, nearly lost it there. Now I'm really starting to scare myself. I suspect that the heat is finally getting to me. My brain feels like it's been cooked, pressed, and packed inside my overheated skull like a chunk of Spam—the finest of molded meat blends, reviled by many but revered by few. Come to think of it, in many ways, the Iraq experience is like a big, greasy hunk of Spam fresh (is that possible?) out of the can: To those raised on it, it might seem like a comfortably familiar if not exactly tasty dietary cornerstone; to those introduced later in life, it's an obviously unhealthy gelatinous mass of mystery meat with an odor that causes queasiness even months after the initial unsavory introduction.

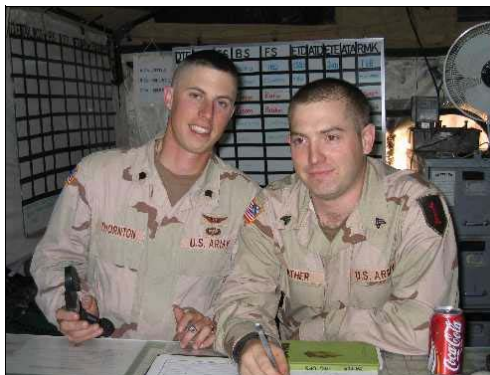
Sweet mother of pearl! In the name of all things sane, somebody stop me! What am I writing? I start off meaning to record this unit's daily testament to the triumph of the human spirit, and I end up comparing this austere land to a tin of pressed ham packed in con-

gealed lard. This one is sure to end up in the censor's wastebasket. Please allow me one last chance to redeem myself and get back on track.

Life here in the desert continues with days that seem long but months that sneak by before we notice. There aren't quite as many of us around on a daily basis as there were earlier in the year, as we have quite a few bodies on R & R at any given time. Nobody's griping about picking up their buddy's slack in exchange for a shot at some time with loved ones. More ice cream for the rest of us, right?

I'm not sure if I made this very clear in my last letter, but it's a trifle warm here. Fortunately, the Army supply guys have had the foresight to know that it's going to cool off in a month or five, so we're receiving shipments of long underwear, fleece jackets, insulated gloves, knit caps, and wool face masks. Lovely. I must have missed the personal cooling unit, but I guess everyone is in on some secret joke since they all keep telling me with straight faces that they didn't get any either. Crafty.

Things are decent—most assuredly tolerable—aside from being away from loved ones. The workload is manageable and the living and working conditions are steadily (if slowly) improving. While parts of the country outside the wire are undeniably unsavory, we can still glimpse the changes that often escape the notice of the media: It's the locals, with our help and without, who are increasingly stepping up and taking on the formidable task of cleaning up a country intimidated and looted for the past thirty years. Taking responsibility for their country is a huge change in thinking for people who've had their personal hopes and dreams stomped flat since before they were born, and there's no question that it takes some time to get used to. But those who have recognized the taste of freedom want more, and they're growing in number and willing to work, even fight, for it. Our efforts are making improvements in the lives of Iraqis, and our work matters. We're making a difference, and I guess that writing a letter once a month is a small price to pay for your unwavering support. Thanks for sharing such a huge part of your lives and loved ones with the world. Your gift is priceless, and we are in your debt.



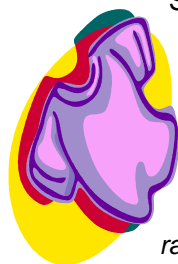
SPC Thornton and SPC Sather are hard at work in the TOC (tactical operations center).

Gunfighter Happenings on the Home Front

Last Chance for T-Shirts

Family members have one last chance to purchase 1-1 AVN Operation Iraqi Freedom II T-shirts! The T-shirts, designed specifically for 1-1 AVN's OIF II deployment, will be on sale through August 5. This will be the last time the battalion will place an order for the T-shirts, so guarantee yourself and your family shirts by placing your order now.

Cost per T-shirt is \$12. You must pay cash by August 5 to secure your shirt. Available sizes are adult S, M, L, XL, and XXL, and youth S, M, and L.



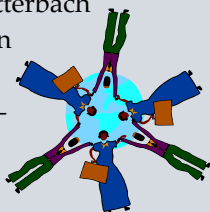
Please call Elizabeth Randall, Family Readiness Administrative Assistant, with questions or to place an order. Elizabeth can be reached Monday-Friday 0900-1700 at 09802-833-013 or by e-mail at elizabeth.randall@cmtymail.98asg.army.mil.

FRG Leader Training

You don't have to be an FRG leader to be an informed volunteer. If you're interested in volunteering for the FRG or would just like to learn more about this organization, Katterbach Army Community Service is offering FRG leader certification training **August 17-19 from 0830-1400**. Course participants will learn about the various support agencies in our community and meet the managers of those programs and agencies. A wide variety of topics are covered, including fundraising, leadership skills, and deployment support. A working lunch is provided, and child-care costs are reimbursable. Call ACS at 09802-832-883 to sign up.

POC Training

ACS is also offering point of contact training for interested individuals this month. If you are currently a POC for your company FRG or are interested in volunteering in this capacity, the training will be held **Tuesday, August 3 from 0900-1100** at Katterbach ACS. POCs play a leadership role in the FRG by disseminating information, combating rumors, and promoting communication. Call ACS to sign up at 09802-832-883.



Company FRG Updates

HHC: A huge thank you goes to D Co.'s Beth Calkins for sharing her time and expertise with us at our July event.

On August 14, the HHC FRG will take a day trip to Altmuhlsee. We'll meet at the Katterbach Fitness Center at 1000 and caravan to a large lake near Gutzenhausen. There's tons to do once we arrive at the Altmuhlsee—boat rides, walking trails, eating, and wind surfing. Please RSVP to Maria Martinez by August 12, so we know how many people to expect.

Also, keep your calendars marked for our August 28 event. Child and Youth Services will be doing a special CDC opening for HHC families from 1600-2000, so spouses can enjoy a well-deserved night out. If you're interested in participating, you'll need to ensure that your children are enrolled at Central Enrollment Registry (09802-832-533). Watch your inbox for more information

—Contributed by Frannie Schneider, HHC FRG Leader

Alpha Company: Thanks to all of you who attended the July coffee at the Yellow Ribbon Room. The A Co. FRG will meet again on August 20 at 1830 at the Yellow Ribbon Room. Information about food and the theme will be distributed via e-mail in the coming weeks. Thanks!

—Contributed by Elizabeth Randall, A Co. FRG Leader



The Delta Company FRG celebrated the summer at the Playmobil Fun Park near Nurnberg on July 1. Above, the **Sweitzer** and **Czarnecki** children let their imagination run free while paddling a raft safely to shore.

R & R Briefings

With the increase in R & R slots, 4th Brigade is offering monthly R & R reunion training for spouses the second Monday of every month. These sessions are designed to provide family members with communication tools that will help them make the most of their time together and cope with the changes that may have occurred while the soldier was downrange. Separate and more extensive reintegration training will be offered prior to the unit's redeployment. The next R & R briefing will be held August 11 at 1800 at the Katterbach Chapel. Contact your company FRG leader with questions or for more information.

Around the Community

Are you looking for ways to fill your time now that your spouse is deployed? The good news is that there's a lot going on within the Ansbach community. Besides the activities that will be sponsored by the FRG throughout the deployment, the 235th BSB is increasing the number of programs available for spouses and family members. In each newsletter, we'll highlight just a few of the community activities targeted toward family members. For more information on any of the programs listed here, contact Heidi Lumley or your company FRG leader.



The **Katterbach Thrift Shop** is holding its grand re-opening after being closed for all of July. Check out the Thrift Shop's new look and new theme. The event will be held August 3-4 from 1000-1400 and August 5 from 1200-1800. There will be free refreshments and all thrift shop property will be 50 percent off for the grand opening. All proceeds from the Katterbach Thrift Shop are given back to the community in the form of welfare donations and scholarships. For more information on the Thrift Shop and the Ansbach Spouses' and Civilians' Club, call 09802-832-534 Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 1000-1400 and Thursdays from 1200-1800.

Outdoor Recreation trips for the months of August and September are as follows: Shop 'til you drop on a **Poland shopping trip** in a charter bus on August 7. Cost is \$45 per person. Immerse yourself in the wild animal kingdoms of the **Munich Zoo** on August 28. Cost is \$25 per person and does not include admittance to the zoo. Experience the magic of **Venice, Italy**, from September 3-6. This three-overnight trip costs \$200 per person. This trip is open to families, but kids must be at least twelve years old to attend. On September 18, we'll tour the city of **Trier**. Cost is \$30 per person. Finally, join us for our annual **Oktoberfest** trip on September 25. Cost is \$30 per person. For more information or to sign up for any of these trips, please contact Outdoor Recreation at 09802-833-225.



One Day Wanders August include: On August 5, we'll head to the **Nurnberg Zoo**. There will be a minimal admittance fee. Join us August 19 for a wild ride at the **Geiselwind** amusement park. Adult admittance will be approximately 19 euros; kids admittance is 10 euros. Enjoy the final days of summer at a **Guttenhausen lake** (Altmuhlsee) on August 26. Cost is free. Transportation for all One Day Wanders is provided at no cost. Call Outdoor Recreation at 09802-833-225 to sign up.

This October, the **Katterbach K-Club** will be moving to the Von Steuben basement. But it won't be the K-Club anymore. More entertainment and innovative programs will be offered at this new club with a new name. Submit your name-change ideas to the K-Club by September 1, and you might win a free club rental for your next party! Call the K-Club at 09802-832-591 for more information.



Preschool creative drama, offered by the Terrace Playhouse, is a parent/child interactive and directed playtime. We make extensive use of movement, music, and imagination. The class gives children up to five years old a taste of theater and gives parents a guided playtime with their child. Back by popular demand, preschool creative drama is continuing through August. Dates and themes are as follows: August 13 (Sleepy Time), August 20 (Let's Dance), August 27 (Chugga, Chugga, Woo-Woo!), and September 3 (Space, the Final Frontier). All sessions are held from 1000-1100 at the Terrace Playhouse on Upper Bleidorn. Call 0981-183-636 for more information.

The Ansbach Girl Scouts invite all girls entering first through twelfth grades to attend this year's **Twilight Camp**. The theme is Girl's Rule, and activities will include a back-to-basics for Girl Scout Ways, such as setting up tents, first aid, hiking, bonfires, and lots of fun! The event will be held August 26 at Soldier's Lake. Registration is from 1500-1600, and the camp will run from 1600-2000. The twenty dollar fee includes Girl Scout registration for the 2004-2005 year, dinner, a bandana, and badges. Each girl will earn one badge and an interest fun patch. All you have to do is show up at Soldier's Lake between 1500-1600 on August 26. POC is Bonnie Johnson at 09872-957-791.



Please join ACS on August 28 from 1100-1400 for the **2004 Ansbach Showcase** extravaganza! ACS has invited fifty community organizations to participate in the event, which will be held in the courtyard in front of the ACS building. Get involved with the PTSA, register to be a volunteer, or learn about Scouting opportunities. Raffle prizes include a weekend getaway for two in Garmisch and a thirty-minute massage. Call ACS at 09802-832-883/846 for more information.

Summer Shout Out



Don't miss this summer's fun! You won't believe the activities that are planned for you from special celebrities, Olympic athletes, career camps, sports camps, and more. Here is the schedule:

NBA Star Mugsy Bogues of the Charlotte Hornets

Location: Katterbach Fitness Center

Date: Tuesday, August 2

Times: 1500

POC: 235th BSB Youth Services, 09802-832-395

World Class Athlete Program: Track and Field Clinic

Location: Ansbach American High School Track

Date: Thursday, August 12

Times: 1000-1200 for grades 1-6, 1300-1500 for youth 7-12 and adults.

POC: 235th BSB Youth Services, 09802-832-395

World Class Athlete Program: Tae Kwon Do Clinic

Location: Katterbach School Age Services

Date: Monday, August 16

Times: 1800-2000

POC: 235th BSB Youth Services, 09802-832-395

2003 Miss Teen USA, Tami Farrell

Location: Katterbach Teen Center

Date: Tuesday, August 17

Time: 1100-1400. Free pizza for lunch is included.

POC: 235th BSB Youth Services, 09802-832-395

Nascar Legend Ernie Ivan

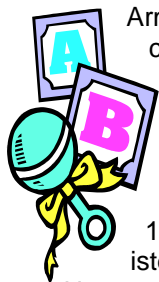
Location: Barton Auto Skills Center and Katterbach Bowling Center

Date: Thursday, August 25

Time: 1600-1800 at Barton and 1830-2030 at the Katterbach Bowling Center

POC: 235th BSB Entertainment Branch, 0981-183-636

Expectant Parents



Army Community Service's New Parent Education and Support Program is offering childbirth classes for expectant parents.

Join other expectant moms and dads as we discuss pregnancy, labor, delivery, and newborn care. The class will be held Monday evenings beginning August 9 from 1900-2100 at ACS. Please call ACS to register at 09802-832-883/846. Contact Stacey Haynes 09802-832-815 or Beth Calkins at 0981-183-739 for more information.

Bridging the Miles

As difficult as it is to be away from your spouse or loved one, sometimes we need to sit back and remember how fortunate we are. It wasn't too long ago when soldiers and spouses separated by a deployment had to rely on letters and monthly phone calls to keep in touch. Here are a few ways to remain close to your spouse through the Internet.

- ♦ Take an Internet virtual tour together of the world's greatest mountain peaks.
- ♦ Use Yahoo Messenger to visit with her as you go on virtual dates on the Internet.
- ♦ Attend a concert together on the Web.
- ♦ Sign up together for a long-distance learning course.
- ♦ Search for a Web site that he might be interested in and send him the Web address.
- ♦ If you have a scanner or digital camera, e-mail your soldier one photo from every day.
- ♦ Go on a fantasy one million dollar shopping spree on the Web together.
- ♦ Try Web cams at the Yellow Ribbon Room (see below), or experience VTC, which is run through 4th Brigade and available to soldiers at FOB Speicher.
- ♦ Listen to a sporting event together on the Internet.
- ♦ Use a program such as Quicken to continue to stay involved with your finances. This will soon be available through the Community Bank Web site: www.dodcommunitybank.com.
- ♦ Take a virtual vacation to Hawaii.

Yellow Ribbon Room

The Yellow Ribbon Room now has two Web cams available for personal use (by appointment only). All you need is a Yahoo account or an IP address to communicate with your loved ones downrange or in the States. Spouses are responsible for communicating with the soldier to coordinate the time. For more information about this and other services offered, please call 09802-832-553/775.





Back to School Special



The aisles of the PX and Wal-Mart alike are lined with crisp notebooks, unsharpened No. 2 pencils, more folders than you can possibly count, and rainbows of crayons. It's a sure sign that the start of another school year is just around the corner. As summer comes to close for Gunfighter families both in Germany and in the States, we bring you information on preparing your child to head back to school and making the most this school year, despite the deployment. Happy learning!

Top-Ten Tips for School Success

1. **Create a smooth takeoff each day.** Give your child a hug before she ventures out the door, and tell her how proud you are of her. Your child's self-confidence and security will help her do well both in school and in life.
2. **Prepare for a happy landing at the end of the day when you reconvene.** Create a predictable ritual such as 10–20 minutes of listening to your child talk about his day—before you check phone messages, read the mail, or begin dinner. You are fully present to listen, and your child has a touchstone he can count on between school and home.
3. **Fill your child's lunchbox with healthy snacks and lunches.** Have dinner at a reasonable hour and a healthy breakfast. A well-balanced diet maximizes your child's learning potential.
4. **Include calm, peaceful times in your children's afternoons and evenings.** Maintain a schedule that allows them to go to school rested, and have a plan so they are able to stay home when ill.
5. **Remember it's your children's homework, not yours.** Create a specific homework space that's clutter-free and quiet. Encourage editing and double-checking work, but allow your kids to make mistakes. It's the only way they will learn responsibility for the quality of their work.
6. **Fill your child's life with a love for learning by showing him your own curiosity, respecting his questions, and encouraging his efforts.**
7. **Fill your home with books to read, books simply to look at, and books that provide answers to life's many questions.** The public or school library is an excellent resource.
8. **Be a partner with your child's teacher.** When you need to speak to your child's teacher in reference to your child, do it privately, not in front of your child. Make a point never to criticize teachers in front of your child.
9. **Set up a system where routine items are easily located—such as backpacks, shoes, and signed notices.** Create a central calendar for upcoming events to avoid the unexpected.
10. **Tuck a love note in your child's lunch bag to let her know she is special.** Knowing they are loved makes it easier for kids to be kind to others.

For more tips like this and information on becoming involved in your child's school, log on to www.pta.org.



School Stats

- ✓ **73.2 million:** The number of U.S. residents enrolled in schools—from nursery schools to colleges. About one-in-four residents age three and older is a student.
- ✓ **52:** Percentage of all three- and four-year-olds who are enrolled in pre-school or kindergarten.
- ✓ **20:** Percentage of elementary and high-school students who have at least one foreign-born parent.
- ✓ **26:** Percentage of all high-school students age fifteen to seventeen who are holding down a full- or part-time job.
- ✓ **850,000:** Number of students who are home-schooled.
- ✓ **\$4.4 million:** The estimated lifetime earnings of professional (i.e. medical, law, dentistry, and veterinary medicine) degree-holders. This compares with \$3.4 million for Ph.D.s, \$2.5 million for master's degree-holders, \$2.1 million for those with bachelor's degrees, \$1.2 million for high-school graduates, and \$1 million for high-school dropouts.
- ✓ **6.5 million:** The number of practicing teachers in the U.S. from pre-kindergarten to college.
- ✓ **13.6 million:** Number of computers available for classroom use in the nation's 111,000 elementary and secondary schools; that comes down to one computer for every four students.

Taken from the U.S. Census.

School Days

It seems that summertime gets shorter and shorter every year—especially if you're a kid. The transition into a new school year is annually greeted with mixed feelings of anticipating, excitement, fear, and regret. But the end of summer doesn't only affect kids. The entire family can be thrown into a state of near-chaos with this change in schedule. Sleep schedules need to be put into place, eating schedules redefined, homework and curfew rules set up, and the list goes on. Here are a few suggestions to help your family ease into the school year:

Bedtimes

It seems that parents never get enough sleep while their kids think they get too much. After enjoying the long days of summer, it's time for parents to create and enforce sleeping schedules. Be warned; this isn't going to be easy but it will be worth it. You certainly don't want to be sending a tired and cranky child off to a busy day of learning. Try enforcing new bed times two to three weeks prior to the beginning of the school year. This should give everyone plenty of time to iron out the wrinkles, work through the inevitable arguments, and adjust to a good night's sleep.

Eating Schedules

During the summer, does your family seem to eat later and later every night? Or perhaps family members have gotten in the habit of fending for themselves in order to adhere to their own active summer social schedule. Now is the time to put an end to this. A family-style, sit-down meal is in order and is a wonderful way for family members to be together and communicate events of the day. Also, keep in mind that lunch is rarely served at noontime in school. It may be a good idea to schedule your mid-day meal earlier in the day as well.

Homework and Curfew Rules

Before school starts, plan a homework and curfew schedule. Sit down and discuss the rules with your children. Be sure that they know these rules are not to be broken. Is the television allowed after school? When is homework to be done? How late is the telephone allowed? What is the school night curfew?

Clothing

Of course, the start of a new school year is practically synonymous with new clothes. Before going school shopping with your children, discuss what types of clothing will and will not be allowed. Also, try getting into the habit of having outfits prepared the night before to eliminate some of the last-minute, frantic rushing in the early morning hours. Have older kids take responsibility for laundering, ironing, and caring for their clothing. If you have younger kids, keep in mind that they will be wearing these clothes all day. Going to the bathroom may be a problem for very young children if they are forced to contend with zippers, buttons, and snaps. Try to choose clothes that require little effort and encourage them to ask their teacher for help to avoid any accidents.

As a family, work together. Remember, back to school does not just affect the lives of your children but the entire family unit as well. Create and discuss new rules and schedules. Listen to and consider feedback from other family members; they might have something to contribute that you hadn't thought to consider. But once a rule or schedule is accepted, enforce it. With these tips, it is possible to start a new year smoothly and enjoy it.

—Written by Dianne Loomis for PageWise, Inc. 2002

Raising Readers

There are a number of steps that parents can take to prepare their young children to become readers and to support the reading habit once they are in school. Here are a few ways to start:



- ❖ Try to read aloud to your children for thirty minutes daily beginning when they are infants.

- ❖ Limit the amount and kind of television your children watch. Seek out educational television or videos that you can watch and discuss with your children.

- ❖ Set up a special place for reading and writing in your home. A well-lit reading corner filled with lots of good books can become a child's favorite place. Keep writing materials such as crayons, washable markers, paints and brushes, and different kinds of paper in a place where children can reach them.

- ❖ You are your child's greatest role model. Demonstrate your own love of reading by spending quiet time in which your child observes you reading to yourself. Show your child how reading and writing help you get things done every day.

- ❖ Consider giving books or magazines to children as presents or as a recognition of special achievements. Special occasions can be the perfect opportunity to give a child a new book to treasure.

- ❖ Visit the public library often to spark your child's interest in books. Help your children obtain their own library cards and pick out their own books.

From "Start Early, Finish Strong: How to Help Every Child"

Summer Boot Camp

The 235th BSB boot camp/summer shape-up program is a four-week fitness program that runs from August 2-27 and is designed to help you get motivated and get in shape. Regardless of your age, size, shape, and fitness abilities, everyone is encouraged to do their best. Boot camp will meet three days a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) for approximately one to two hours at a time from 1330-1530 at the Katterbach Fitness Center.

During boot camp, all recruits will be doing stretches, calisthenics (i.e. push-ups, crunches, etc.), aerobic exercise, and strength training, just to name a few of the activities, as well as learning about nutrition. Recruits will be required to arrive on time to each session and are encouraged to participate in all training sessions. As a result of missed days, your teammates may have to endure extra push-ups or crunches for the ones that you have missed. However, at no time will we require any recruit to do more than he or she is capable of doing safely.

During the first day or two of our program, we will be completing forms and assessing each participant. This will involve testing each participant to see how many sit-ups/crunches and push-ups he or she can do in sixty seconds and how long it takes for you to walk/run a half

mile. If you're thinking that you don't have what it takes to complete even one push-up, that's okay because you're probably not alone. You don't have to be in shape to start this program. If you've attended every training session and have adjusted your eating habits, by the end of the four-week program you should be able to see the results of all your hard work.

If you're wondering just how much weight, inches, or body fat you will lose, the answer is up to you. For the greatest success, you have to be willing to work hard and, again, adjust your eating habits. Success is not only measured by the weight loss shown on the scale, but it is also shown in the way we look and how we feel about our bodies.

Fitness is not just a one-time quick deal. Fitness is a way of life. The quality of the life you lead is up to you. After completing the boot camp program, we hope that you will continue to challenge your body and retain these new training habits you have learned. So put on your comfortable clothing and a good pair of running/training gym shoes and let's work out! Remember to always carry a bottle of water with you to help keep your body hydrated. Contact the fitness coordinator for more information at 09802-832-810. Sign up is required.



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MPS



GUNFIGHTER GAZETTE